

THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Original) A method for initiating services via a mobile device, comprising:
 - providing one or more transponders having information associated therewith, at a location substantially accessible to a mobile device user;
 - associating a visual representation with each of the one or more transponders, wherein each visual representation corresponds to at least one function to be performed;
 - activating at least one of the transponders via a wireless signal transmitted by the mobile device in response to the mobile device being positioned proximate the visual representation associated with the transponder;
 - receiving the information from the activated transponder at the mobile device;
 - invoking a mobile device application, identified at least in part by the information received by the mobile device; and
 - performing the function corresponding to the visual representation in response to invoking the mobile device application.
2. (Original) The method as in Claim 1, wherein associating a visual representation with each of the one or more transponders comprises associating at least a text message with at least one of the transponders, wherein the text message identifies the function associated with the respective transponder.
3. (Original) The method as in Claim 1, wherein associating a visual representation with each of the one or more transponders comprises associating at least an image with at least one of the transponders, wherein the image identifies the function associated with the respective transponder.
4. (Original) The method as in Claim 1, wherein associating a visual representation with each of the one or more transponders comprises positioning an item including the visual representation proximate its associated transponder.

5. (Original) The method as in Claim 1, wherein associating a visual representation with each of the one or more transponders comprises integrating the visual representation with its associated transponder.

6. (Original) The method as in Claim 1, wherein the information comprises at least an application identifier to identify the mobile device application to be invoked.

7. (Original) The method as in Claim 1, wherein the information comprises content for use by the invoked mobile device application in performing the function.

8. (Original) The method as in Claim 1, wherein the information comprises at least an application identifier to identify the mobile device application to be invoked, and content for use by the identified mobile device application in performing the function.

9. (Original) The method as in Claim 1, wherein activating at least one of the transponders in response to the mobile device being positioned proximate the visual representation comprises activating the transponder in response to the mobile device being positioned within a wireless transmission range between a reader device associated with the mobile device and the transponder.

10. (Original) The method as in Claim 9, further comprising enhancing the wireless transmission range by providing a separate power source at the transponder.

11. (Original) The method as in Claim 1, wherein the transponders comprise radio frequency identification (RFID) tags and the wireless signal transmitted by the mobile device comprises an RFID signal.

12. (Original) The method as in Claim 11, wherein receiving the information from the activated transponder comprises receiving the information from the activated transponder at the mobile device by way of RFID backscattering.

13. (Previously presented) A method for initiating services via a mobile device, comprising:

- providing one or more transponders having information associated therewith, at a location substantially accessible to a mobile device user;
- associating a visual representation with each of the one or more transponders, wherein each visual representation corresponds to at least one function to be performed;
- activating at least one of the transponders via a wireless signal transmitted by the mobile device in response to the mobile device being positioned proximate the visual representation associated with the transponder;
- receiving the information from the activated transponder at the mobile device;
- invoking a mobile device application, identified at least in part by the information received by the mobile device;
- performing the function corresponding to the visual representation in response to invoking the mobile device application; and
- establishing, in response to the invoked mobile device application, an over-the-air (OTA) connection to a network.

14. (Original) The method as in Claim 13, wherein the invoked application comprises a Short Messaging Service (SMS) application, and wherein establishing an OTA connection to the network comprises transmitting an SMS push request, based at least in part on the content, to the network.

15. (Original) The method as in Claim 13, wherein the invoked application comprises a Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS) application, and wherein establishing an OTA connection to the network comprises transmitting an MMS push request, based at least in part on the content, to the network.

16. (Original) The method as in Claim 13, wherein the invoked application comprises a mobile telephony application, and wherein establishing an OTA connection to the network comprises establishing via the network a mobile telephony connection between the mobile device and one or more destination devices identified by the information provided by the respective transponder.

17. (Original) The method as in Claim 13, wherein the invoked application comprises a push-to-talk (PTT) application, and wherein establishing an OTA connection to the network comprises establishing via the network a PTT connection between the mobile device and one or more destination devices identified by the information provided by the respective transponder.

18. (Original) The method as in Claim 13, wherein the invoked application comprises a browser, and wherein establishing an OTA connection to the network comprises establishing a session to access, via the browser, at least one network site identified by a URL provided via the content.

19. (Original) The method as in Claim 13, wherein the invoked application comprises a Java download application, and wherein establishing an OTA connection to the network comprises transmitting a Java MIDlet request, based at least in part on the information provided by the transponder, to the network.

20. (Original) A method for communicating over a network via a mobile device equipped with a radio frequency (RF) reader, comprising:

- identifying at least one desired communication function among one or more visually-presented communication function identifiers, wherein each of the visually-presented communication function identifiers is associated with at least one transponder storing information thereon;

- selecting the desired communication function by positioning the RF reader proximate the corresponding visually-presented communication function identifier and consequently within a transmission range of the transponder associated with the desired communication function;

- receiving the stored information from the transponder at the mobile device via the RF reader;

- activating at least one local application on the mobile device in response to the stored information; and

- communicating with at least one destination network element over the network using a mobile service facilitated by the activated local application.

21. (Original) The method as in Claim 20, further comprising positioning the one or more visually-presented communication functions within the mobile device user's residence at one or more locations available to the mobile device user.

22. (Original) The method as in Claim 20, wherein the desired communication function comprises requesting health-related assistance, and wherein communicating with at least one destination network element comprises at least one of sending a message to or establishing a communication session with a designated health care facility.

23. (Original) The method as in Claim 20, wherein the desired communication function comprises requesting transmission of at least one message to the at least one destination network element, and wherein communicating with at least one destination network element comprises sending a message over the network to the at least one destination network element.

24. (Original) The method as in Claim 23, wherein sending a message over the network comprises any of sending an SMS message, an MMS message, and a Push-to-Talk (PTT) message to the at least one destination network element.

25. (Original) The method as in Claim 23, wherein requesting transmission of at least one message comprises requesting transmission of at least one message to the at least one destination network element indicating acknowledgement of user consumption of a medicinal dose.

26. (Original) The method as in Claim 23, wherein requesting transmission of at least one message comprises requesting transmission of at least one message to the at least one destination network element to request assistance.

27. (Original) The method as in Claim 20, wherein activating at least one local application on the mobile device comprises activating at least one of an SMS application, an MMS application, and a PTT application.

28. (Original) The method as in Claim 20, wherein the desired communication function comprises initiating a telephony session with the at least one destination network element, and wherein communicating with the at least one destination network element comprises communicating between the mobile device and the destination network element via a cellular network.

29. (Original) The method as in Claim 20, further comprising recognizing, at an intermediary network element, a failure of the communication with the destination network element within a designated time period or by a designated time, and communicating information by the intermediary network element to one or more network destinations indicating the failure of the communication with the destination network element.

30. (Original) A method for initiating communications via a mobile terminal, comprising:
 providing one or more radio frequency identification (RFID) tags each associated with media identifying a function to be performed by each respective RFID tag;
 transmitting an RFID activation signal from the mobile terminal;
 activating at least one RFID tag in response to the RFID activation signal when the RFID tag is within a radio frequency (RF) transmission range of the mobile terminal;
 receiving at least an application identifier and content from the activated RFID tag at the mobile terminal when the mobile terminal is within a backscatter transmission range of the RFID tag;
 locating a local application on the mobile terminal using the application identifier;
 providing the content to the local application; and
 executing the local application using at least a portion of the content to perform the function associated with the activated RFID tag.

31. (Original) The method as in Claim 30, further comprising selecting, by a user of the mobile terminal, at least one of the functions to be performed by positioning the mobile terminal proximate the media associated with the RFID tag of the function.

32. (Original) The method as in Claim 30, wherein the media comprises any one or more of textual indicia, one or more images, photographs, physical indicia perceivable by touch, and sound.

33. (Original) The method as in Claim 30, further comprising configuring one or more of the RFID tags to correspond to user interface elements of the mobile terminal, and wherein the content received at the mobile terminal corresponds to content associated with the mobile terminal user interface element for which the respective RFID tag is configured.

34. (Original) The method as in Claim 33, wherein the one or more RFID tags are configured to correspond to at least one of a graphical user interface (GUI) menu of the mobile terminal and to physical keyboard elements of the mobile terminal.

35. (Original) A system for facilitating communication over a network, the system comprising:
one or more items each having a visual representation of an available communication function;

one or more transponders each associated with one of the items;

a mobile device operable by a user, comprising:

a radio frequency reader module comprising a transceiver to send activation signals recognizable by the one or more transponders, and to receive at least an application identifier and content in response to one of the transponders being activated by the activation signals when the mobile device is positioned proximate the item associated with that transponder;

a memory for storing one or more local applications and a reader application; and

a processor coupled to the memory and the radio frequency reader module, wherein the processor is configured to invoke at least one of the local applications identified by the application identifier and to provide the content to the local application as directed by the reader application, thereby performing the communication function corresponding to the item associated with the activated transponder via the network.

36. (Original) The system as in Claim 35, wherein transponder comprises a radio frequency identification (RFID) tag.

37. (Original) The system as in Claim 35, wherein the mobile device comprises one or more of a mobile phone and a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA).

38. (Original) The system as in Claim 35, wherein the network comprises a wireless network, and wherein the mobile device further comprises means for communicating via the wireless network.

39. (Original) The system as in Claim 35, wherein the one or more transponders emulate at least a portion of a user interface available on the mobile device.

40. (Original) The system as in Claim 39, wherein the one or more transponders emulate at least a portion of a graphical user interface (GUI) available on the mobile device.

41. (Original) The system as in Claim 40, wherein the one or more transponders emulate one or more of a GUI menu, GUI navigation indicia, and GUI links.

42. (Original) The system as in Claim 39, wherein the one or more transponders emulate at least a portion of a hardware user interface available on the mobile device.

43. (Original) The system as in Claim 42, wherein the one or more transponders emulate a numeric keypad available on the mobile device, and wherein the items associated with the transponders each depict a numeral of the numeric keypad available on the mobile device.

44. (Original) A system for facilitating communications over a network, comprising:
a mobile device comprising a radio frequency (RF) reader device, a transceiver to communicate over the network, and one or more application modules;
one or more items each having a visual representation of an available communication function;

one or more transponders each positioned proximate one of the items, each of the transponders comprising an antenna circuit to communicate at least an application identifier to the RF reader device in response to receipt of a triggering signal from the RF reader device when positioned proximate one of the items and within an RF transmission range of a corresponding one of the transponders; and

wherein the RF reader device receives the communicated application identifier, and in response the mobile device activates the application module identified by the application identifier to perform the communication function.

45. (Original) A transponder device for use with mobile devices having a radio frequency (RF) reader device, wherein the mobile devices include one or more mobile device applications each identifiable by an application identifier, the transponder device comprising:

- a visual identifier visually depicting a communication function operable via the mobile device;

- a memory to store information including the application identifier;

- an antenna circuit to receive a carrier signal from the RF reader device when the mobile device is positioned proximate the visual identifier such that the RF reader device is within an RF communication range of the transponder device, and to transmit the application identifier via a backscattered signal to the RF reader device to enable the mobile device application identified by the application identifier to perform the depicted communication function.

46. (Original) The transponder device as in Claim 45, wherein the visual identifier comprises a representation of the communication function embodied on an item positioned to associate the item with the transponder device.

47. (Original) The transponder device as in Claim 45, wherein the transponder device comprises a selectable switch to facilitate selection of the application identifier and content to be provided by the transponder.

48. (Previously presented) An apparatus comprising:

a radio frequency reader configured to receive a radio frequency signal including information to invoke an application when the apparatus is positioned within a signal range of a transponder marked with a visual representation of at least one function to be performed;

a processor configured to invoke the application and in response to establish an over-the-air connection to a network, and to perform the at least one function corresponding to the visual representation and involving the over-the-air connection to the network.

49. (Previously presented) A system comprising:

one or more visual representations of an available communication function;

one or more transponders each associated with one of the visual representations;

one or more mobile devices each comprising:

(a) a radio frequency reader configured to receive a radio frequency signal carrying information from the transponder within a radio frequency signal range of the mobile device; and

(b) a processor configured to invoke an application identified by the received information, and in response to establish an over-the-air connection to a network and perform the communication function corresponding to the visual representation associated with the transponder within the radio frequency signal range.

50. (Previously presented) Computer-readable media having instructions stored thereon which are executable by a processing system by performing steps comprising:

receiving a radio frequency signal and obtaining therefrom application identification information;

invoking at least one application identified by the received application identification information;

establishing an over-the-air connection to a network in response to invoking the at least one application, and performing a function identified by a visual representation associated with a source of the radio frequency signal and involving the over-the-air connection to the network.